(a) whether any decision has been taken to exclude all Government servants from the Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the reasons for removing middle-class people from the P.D.S.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c). The Advisory Council on Public Distribution System had set up a Committee of Ministers of Food and Civil Supplies from three State Governments for making recommendations regarding a National policy on PDS. The Committee had recommended in its report that in order to ensure larger and more meaningful quantities of foodgrains to the poor through the PDS it is imperative that the more affluent sections of society be excluded from the supply of subsidised foodgrains. The report of the Committee of Ministers was considered by the Advisory Council on PDS in its 16th meeting held in September, 1993. The Council recommended that the report be discussed further with the State Governments through the forum of the National Development Council. The Government has not taken any decision so far in the matter.

PDS in the backward blocks in Andhra Pradesh

633. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the Status of Government's policy to intensify and extend public distribution system in the most backward blocks;

(b) how many such blocks have been selected in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the status of implementation of this policy in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMLUDDIN AHMED): (a) The Central Government, in consultation with the State Governments identified about 1752 blocks covered by various area specific programmes such as Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP), Designated Hill Area (DHA) and Integrated Tribal Development projects (ITDP) for implementation of the Revamped Public Distribution System. The Scheme provides for reduction of Central Issue Prices (CIP) of foodgrains by Rs. 50 per quintal for such backward blocks.

State Governments/U.T. Administrations agreed to take action in regard to—

(i) opening of additional fair price shops;

(ii) issue of additional ration cards;

(iii) to develop infrastructure for creating or hiring storage capacity for stocking of foodgrains;

(iv) to make necessary arrangements for delivery of PDS items at the doorsteps of the fair price shops in the interior areas;

(v) distribute additional items of mass consumption such as pulses, tea, washing soaps, and iodised salt;

(vi) set up Vigilance Committees at FPS/Village level to monitor the supply and availability of items at the FPSs.

State Governments/UT Administrations have been implementing the action points mentioned above.

(b) Areas covered by Drought Prone Area programme (DPAP) and Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) in

Andhra Pradesh are included in RPDS. These areas correspond to 120 erstwhile blocks presently under 382 mandals.

(c) The targets and achievements on the points mentioned above at part (a) relating to Andhra Pradesh is as under:

Progress of Implementation in Andhra Pradesh under RPDS as per reports received till 15.2.1994.

		Target	Achievement
(i)	Opening of additonal FPSs.	316	362
(ii)	Issue of additional ration cards	—	1,33,756
(iii)	Storage capacity	—	1,15,000 (hired)
(iv)	No. of FPSs covered under doorstep delivery system	8233	8233
(v)	No. of FPS level Vigilance Committee constituted.	8233	8233
(vi)	additional items distributed through PDS	Iodised salt, tea, textbooks, Janta sarees, soaps, pulses, dhotis.	

Release of foodgrains by the State Government for PDS

634. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have advised the State Governments to release foodgrains for PDS wherever necessary to maintain easy availability of foodgrains; and

(a) if so, whether this decision has helped in checking the steep-rise in prices of all essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b). Central Government makes bulk allocations of foodgrains for the Public Distribution System to State Governments/UT Administrations from month to month taking into account the availability of stocks with the Central Government, inter se requirements of States/UTs and seasonal requirements. Internal distribution of foodgrains allocated by Central Government is a matter which falls within the administrative jurisdiction of State Governments and UT Administrations. Central Government has advised State Governments/UT Administrations to increase the allocations made by them to areas covered under the Ravamped PDS since these areas are chronically food deficit. Release of food grains for the Public Distribution System has a moderating effect on their open market prices.

Rise of wholesale price Index

635. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the wholesale price index for essential commodities registered a sharp rise towards the end of August, 1993 by 0.5% and further rise during the months of September and October, 1993;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons for the same; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMLUDDIN AHMED): (a) The Wholesale Price Index Numbers of essential commodities and their percentage variation during the months of August, 1993 September, 1993 and October, 1993 are shown in the